



NEWS RELEASE

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California Consumer Affairs Director Announces Hazardous Toys to Avoid During Holiday Gift-Giving Season

First Alert from New Partnership Aims at Getting Consumer Safety Information to the Public Faster

SACRAMENTO -- There are toys out there this holiday season that will not bring joy to boys and girls. The director of the California Department of Consumer Affairs announced a list of recalled hazardous toys this morning in Sacramento. "These are toys that have the potential for seriously hurting our children," said Director Charlene Zettel. "Consumers need to keep their eyes open for these products and keep them away from children."

The recalled toys include the Nerf Big Play Football, a Batmobile toy car from Mattel, and books containing mirrors that can break and cut children. A complete list is available at the California Department of Consumer Affairs Web site, www.dca.ca.gov. While the products should have already been removed from store shelves, the toys can turn up at flea markets, outlet stores, yard sales, or may have been bought before the recalls were announced.

"It is all about choosing wisely," said Director Zettel. "Look for labels that give age and safety recommendations. Avoid toys with small parts that can be a choking hazard. And, ask yourself if this is an appropriate choice for this particular child."

The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) has reports of 11 toy-related deaths involving children under the age of 15 in 2003. Most of the deaths occurred when a child choked on toys or small pieces from toys. The CPSC also reports that an estimated 155,400 children were treated for toy-related injuries at hospital emergency rooms across the country.

The hazardous toy announcement also marks the launch of the "Neighborhood Safety Network." The California Department of Consumer Affairs has joined forces with the U.S. Product Safety Commission, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the American Academy of Pediatricians, Indian Health Service, National SAFE KIDS Coalition, Meals on Wheels, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development for this early alert system.

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The "Neighborhood Safety Network" is a grass-roots program that quickly gets the word out about product safety issues through the distribution of alerts in the form of posters and other materials. By reaching out to the elderly, urban and rural low-income families, new parents and ethnic minority groups, the network hopes to reduce deaths and injuries.

The California Department of Consumer Affairs mission is to promote and protect the interests of California consumers. The department with its 40 boards, bureaus and programs licenses and regulates business, service and health professionals. More information about the Department of Consumer affairs is available at www.dca.ca.gov or you can call toll free at: (800) 952-5210.

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